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Cable dated:2005-11-16T09:53:00 C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 007777 SIPDIS E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/7/2015 TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KDEM](#) [T](#)

¶1. (C) Summary: The November 11 assault of a French journalist in Tunis by unknown assailants widely believed to belong to the Tunisian security forces. French media continues to report widely on the attack on "Liberation" correspondent Christophe Boltanski, who was beaten and stabbed. In a November 13 statement issued some 40 hours after the Boltanski assault took place, the MFA declared, "We have made it known to the Tunisian government that the attack on Christophe Boltanski is unacceptable and that it must be condemned." The Tunisian Foreign Minister also told usXXXXXX that the Boltanski attack would not affect GoF participation in the WSIS, for which Minister of Economy and Finance XXXXXXXXXX remained skeptical on prospects for finding Boltanski's attackers or for any near-term improvement in Tunisia's human rights record. Pressed to explain why the GoF could not speak more forcefully with Tunisia on human rights, given the friendship between the two countries, the Foreign Minister responded that the GoF had no comment. (C) Comment: We view this controversy as indicative of the degree to which President Chirac's "stability first" and tradition of cultivating Hofmann